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**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2011**

ATTENDANCE

Chair Mackenzie convened the meeting at 9:32 a.m. Committee members present were: Vice Chair Mullen, Commissioners Azumbrado, Green, Haggerty, Halsted, Liccardo and Spering. Commissioner Rein Worth was present in her ex-officio capacity. Other Commissioners present as ad hoc members of the Committee were Commissioners Bates, Campos, Cortese, Dodd, and Wiener.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon motion of Commissioner Haggerty, and second of Commissioner Spering, the Committee unanimously approved the consent calendar:

- Minutes of November 4, 2011;
- Contract Amendment – Freeway Performance Initiative Traffic Analysis: Dowling Associates, Inc. (\$647,440);
- Funding Agreement Amendment - Safe on 17 Program: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (\$150,000);
- Clipper® Program Contract Actions:
 - i. Customer Communication, Education, and Public Services Consultant Panel for FY 2011-12 – FY 2013-14;
 - ii. Contract Amendment – In-Person Customer Outreach Services: Caribou Public Relations (\$150,000);
 - iii. Contract Amendment – Program Management: Synapse Strategies (\$244,000);
 - iv. Contract Amendment – Employer Program, Card Management and Card/Value Distribution Oversight: Acumen Building Enterprise, Inc. (\$125,000).

Call Box Program Evaluation

Ms. Stefanie Pow, MTC staff person, reported that last April, this Committee was informed of an evaluation of the Call Box program. She presented an overview of the call box program evaluation results, and noted that there are two main components of the evaluation, which are: 1) analysis on call box call data from 2006-10; and 2) a survey of Bay Area motorists' cell phone ownership and driving behavior. She reported that in developing the plan to modernize the call box program, three guidelines were followed: 1) maintain a lifeline system in areas where there is unreliable cell service, 2) invest in other programs that can provide similar call box services, and 3) minimize changes to motorists' expectations.

Ms Pow reported that staff recommends a 50% reduction of urban call boxes, which would effectively include the removal of every other call box, to maintain consistent spacing. Additionally, all call boxes to be removed will be vetted by CHP and Caltrans. A spot removal in rural areas will be conducted as appropriate. She noted that the call box reduction is consistent with other call box programs within the State of California. The second phase will be to increase public awareness, which will include 511 freeway aid, installing signs advertising the program, and displaying 511 aid messages on changeable message signs. Last, staff will remove call boxes by urban corridor if applicable at the time. Staff will hold discussions with CHP and Caltrans to amend the call box implementation plan, and develop 511 freeway aid marketing strategies. Staff will return to this Committee for approval of future contracts to reduce the call box system and install 511 freeway aid signs.

Commissioner Green recommended that staff take into consideration the amount of lighting in areas where call boxes will be removed.

Commissioner Haggerty asked what staff will do with the call boxes that will be removed. Ms. Pow responded that the boxes could be returned back to inventory, or they can be sold to universities or other contractors. Commissioner Haggerty stated that there is a road in Alameda County named Mines Road which is about 30 miles. He noted that they have asked to put call boxes on the road. He suggested that staff identify the rural roads where cell phones do not work, but call boxes would work. Ms. Pow responded that staff will assess whether the call boxes can be shifted to rural locations. Commissioner Haggerty asked if there could be some discussion of this item during the SAFE Authority meeting.

Chair Mackenzie stated that it would be appropriate, given Commissioner Haggerty's comments, when this goes to the Authority, that Committee members get a response on those matters also. Commissioner Haggerty also suggested that staff make some call boxes available to the counties, if they want to pay to have them installed on their own.

Commissioner Green stated that to follow-up Commissioner Haggerty's comment, he thinks it would be a good idea to have this noted in our own expenditure plan.

Chair Mackenzie stated that when staff have their discussions regarding this item with Caltrans and CHP, that the Committee members concerns also be brought up at that time.

Commissioner Halsted asked if the call boxes were more reliable than cell phones in cases of emergencies. Mr. Albert Yee, Director of Highway and Arterial Operations, responded that the call boxes are on the conventional cellular network, except in areas where staff knows the cell services are bad. Therefore, they do not provide any disaster type of communication.

Staff recommends downsizing of the call boxes be referred to the SAFE Authority, subject to meeting the requirements of the discussions with CHP and Caltrans prior to proceeding and to an analysis under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Commissioner Haggerty moved that the item be referred to the SAFE Authority for approval, providing that questions raised by Committee members at this Committee meeting be addressed when this matter goes to the SAFE Authority. Commissioner Spering seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment/Other Business/Next Meeting/Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Mackenzie adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.